UNITED
NATIONS

E

Economic and Social
Council

Distr.
GENERAL

E/CN.4/1999/89/Add.1
5 March 1999

Original: ENGLISH

COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS
Fifty-fifth session
Item 17 (d) of the provisional agenda

PROMOTION AND PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

SCIENCE AND ENVIRONMENT

Report by the Secretary-General prepared in accordance with Commission decision 1997/102

Addendum

I. COMMENTS SUBMITTED BY UNITED NATIONS DEPARTMENTS AND BODIES

United Nations Environment Programme

[Original: English]
[20 January 1999]

1. The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) reported that the main focus of its activities in the field of human rights and the environment during the past two years has been the provision of assistance to developing countries and countries in economic transition in building national capacities for the development of environmental legislation and institutions, inter alia through:

(a) Assisting in the review and development of national and international environmental law, including the implementation of multilateral agreements through national legislation, with the involvement of all stakeholders including non-governmental organizations and the private sector;

(b) Providing advisory services to sensitize Governments with regard to the need to incorporate in the Constitution, in framework environmental laws or in international environmental instruments, provisions on the individual's right to a clean and healthy environment, access to justice and information - including prior informed consent procedures - public participation in decision-making and access to justice in environmental matters;

(c) Training in environmental law, policy and institutions through seminars and workshops dealing inter alia with public access to environmental information and education, providing opportunities in environmental decision-making and increasing access to judicial and administrative procedures at both the national and international levels;

(d) Creating public awareness in regard to environmental rights through the development of and access to electronic information systems, and publications on environmental law, including training manuals, legislative guidelines and the compilation of existing laws, for example, the Compendium of Environmental Laws of African Countries that provide comparative legal information and facilitate the exchange of such information;

(e) Increasing public awareness regarding access to judicial and administrative remedies nationally and internationally: sensitizing magistrates, judges, prosecutors and lawyers and organizing environmental litigation workshops to assess the applicability of the jurisprudence under various jurisdictions and examine the utilization of analogies in different situations.